



# PHIL ANDREWS

## Reports to Council District 3

Derwood, Gaithersburg, North Potomac, Rockville, Washington Grove

### Schools and Libraries

Lifelong education is most people's ticket to a better life. As a graduate of our County's public schools, the son of a retired County librarian who was also a teacher, and the parent of a current MCPS student, I understand and appreciate how central excellent public schools and libraries are to our County's success.

The County Council has approved \$160 million since 1999 to reduce class size to 15 students per teacher in 1st and 2nd grade reading classes. All schools will have all-day kindergarten this fall.

The Council added funds to keep school construction projects on schedule. The new Richard Montgomery HS will open in 2007; the Gaithersburg HS and Northwest HS additions are underway. Additions at Fallsmead ES, Fields Rd. ES, Travilah ES, Washington Grove ES, and Watkins Mill ES, and major improvements for Redland MS and Ridgeview MS were not delayed. Meadow Hall ES and Thurgood Marshall ES will get gyms, as will College Gardens ES and Farmland ES as part of their modernizations. And the Gaithersburg HS and Walter Johnson HS modernizations will stay on schedule.

The Council approved funding to freeze tuition at Montgomery College, which serves needy students so well.

I'm delighted that the new Rockville Library will open this fall. I led the fight that ended the plan to charge users \$1 an hour for parking; there will be no *de facto* admissions fee. I also advocated for the funding that will keep the renovation of Gaithersburg Library on schedule.

Dear Neighbor,

A constituent once asked how many letters or emails it takes to convince me to support an issue. I replied it only takes one if it makes a compelling case—and no amount is enough otherwise.

My job is to discern and fight for the common good, whether or not that is popular at the moment. I was the lead sponsor of our County's Smoke-free Restaurant law, the first in the region. I was the lead sponsor of our County's Living Wage law, which helps lift employees of County contractors out of poverty. I initiated the first property tax relief passed by this County Council; the County's FY07 property tax rate is 10% less than in FY04. I chair the Public Safety Committee, and was the lead sponsor of the law that requires fire sprinklers in all new homes, which protects both residents and firefighters. I co-led the effort that rejected the Executive's \$350 ambulance fee.

Sometimes calling issues as you see them means standing alone. I voted against the Shady Grove Sector Plan because the 6,300 homes planned are too many for an already highly congested area. However, I attached an amendment to the Plan that will require that the traffic-choked 355/Gude Drive intersection be grade-separated to relieve traffic before most of the development can proceed. I opposed the 20-year retirement proposed by the County Executive for career firefighters. Public safety isn't served by encouraging highly trained and experienced fire and rescue officers to leave in the prime of their careers.

I value hearing from you. My staff and I work to provide outstanding constituent service. Call me at 240-777-7906 or email [councilmember.andrews@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:councilmember.andrews@montgomerycountymd.gov).

*Phil Andrews*

## New and Continuing Initiatives

### Property Tax Relief

I have led the battles on the Council to cut property tax rates to provide relief to homeowners hit hard by skyrocketing assessments. Since property taxes are more regressive than most other taxes, rates should be kept low. A homeowner whose assessment rose by 70% in the last cycle (about average), would likely see a doubling of their property tax bill in seven years. That's unacceptable.

Since I introduced the resolution in 2004 to cut the property tax rate, the Council has cut the rate by 10%, and approved credits of \$337 for all homeowners. The Council has also expanded eligibility for the "circuitbreaker" credit that enables homeowners with incomes below \$60,000 and modest assets to qualify for substantial tax credits. Call 1-800-944-7403 if you need more information.

### Free Parking at Libraries

There should be no barriers to library use, including a charge for parking. That's why I led the battle on the Council for the new policy that ensures that users of the new Rockville Library—opening in fall, 2006—won't be charged for parking. The fee would have been \$1 an hour, an obstacle to use.

Rockville civic leader Lora Meisner, Rockville City Councilmember Anne Robbins, and Rockville civic leader Irwin Charles Cohen join County Councilmember Phil Andrews at a Feb. news conference calling for free parking at the new County library in Rockville.



### Affordable Housing

The Council made this challenge harder when it adopted an economic development strategy of adding jobs faster than housing—a policy which puts upward pressure on housing prices and worsens rush-hour traffic as workers commute in.

The County should do all that it can to stop the conversion of affordable units to market-rate units. If you rent and need information about your rights, call the County's Housing Dept. at 240-777-3600.

### Living Wages

I wrote and for three years led the fight for the County's Living Wage law, which took effect July 1, 2003. My goal was to ensure that employees of County contractors are paid above the poverty level while working on County time. An ancillary benefit is lower employee turnover, usually producing higher quality service.

The Living Wage law covers most County service contracts of \$50,000 or more with for-profit companies of 10



County Councilmembers Phil Andrews and Tom Perez call on the owners of the Oakwood Apartments in Gaithersburg to retain 157 affordable units. The owners agreed to a 10-year extension.

or more employees. A credit is given for health insurance. The Living Wage is adjusted annually to match increases in the Consumer Price Index. Beginning July 1, 2006, the Living Wage will be \$11.60 per hour, about \$24,000 a year.

### Inspector General

As a former executive director of Common Cause of Maryland, I have long advocated for independent monitors. That's why I led the battle with Councilmember Tom Perez and former Councilmember Ike Leggett—the author of the County's Inspector General law—that defeated a serious attempt to eliminate the Inspector General in 2003.

The IG is interested in hearing your concerns about potential waste, fraud or abuse, and may be contacted at 240-777-8240 or [IG@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:IG@montgomerycountymd.gov).

### Free Bus Service for Seniors and People with Disabilities

After consulting with the County's Commission on Aging and reviewing studies showing the importance of social interaction for senior health, I proposed and the Council approved funding for free Ride-on and Metrobus service for seniors and people with disabilities from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays beginning July 3, 2006. Cost is estimated at a modest \$250,000.

## Emergency Preparedness

**A**s chair of the Council's Public Safety Committee, I am often asked about the County's emergency preparedness. After being briefed and carefully reviewing the County's plans for emergencies, I am confident that the County Government is well-prepared for emergencies, whether they are caused by weather, traffic crashes, epidemics, or terrorism. Extensive planning and test runs have been done, and plans are regularly updated. Our dedicated public safety personnel are among the best-trained in the nation, and have assisted other jurisdictions in emergencies, such as Sept. 11, 2001 and Katrina.

In an emergency, it is much more likely that we will need to shelter-in-place than evacuate. Each of us must be prepared.

In an emergency, most of us would likely shelter-in-place at our homes, but some situations might require sheltering-in-place in an office, or even in a car in a traffic emergency. The most likely emergency is a loss of electric power for a few days or longer from a storm.

Terrorism concerns us all. We border Washington D.C. and house numerous federal facilities. The County's ability to respond optimally requires a prepared, cooperative public. Families need a pre-arranged plan and meeting place if separated and unable to communicate. Keep contact numbers for doctors with you.

The County has developed a plan, Ready Montgomery, to help people prepare for an emergency. Call 240-777-1245 for more information. To be notified quickly via email/phone/PDA about emergencies, sign up for Alert Montgomery by visiting [www.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov). The County's Advanced Practice Center for Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (part of Health and Human Services) suggests that everyone have nine items on hand to be ready to shelter-in-place in an emergency.

### Plan 9: Nine items you need in an emergency to shelter-in-place

**1. Bottled Water** One gallon a day per person for 3–5 days. Keep the water in a dark cool place and replace it with fresh water every six months.

**2. Non-perishable Food** 3–5 day supply of food per person, including: ready-to-eat canned meat, fruit and vegetables; boxed or canned juices; powdered milk and soup; crackers, granola, trail mix.

**3. Clothes** One change of clothes and footwear per person. Pack blankets, rain gear and outerwear in case of cold or inclement weather.

**4. Medications** Have three days worth of any prescription medicines you're on. Check expiration date.

**5. Bright Flashlight** A lantern-style light allows hands-free use. Don't use candles; they're a fire hazard. Remember to stock up on batteries.

**6. Manual Can Opener** Buying items with pull-top openings is a good idea.

**7. Battery-powered Radio** You'll need this to listen to the news and weather. Have plenty of batteries on hand.

**8. Hygiene Items** Soap, toilet paper, toothbrushes, etc.

**9. First Aid Kit** Pre-made kits are available at most pharmacies and grocery stores. Basics include non-prescription medicines, antiseptic, bandages, and gloves.



## Transportation

### Real Traffic Relief Must Include Slower Growth

We need traffic relief now. We must slow down growth until we catch up on infrastructure, and focus spending on cost-effective road, transit, bikeway and pedestrian improvements (such as the marked improvements on Great Seneca Hwy. at Muddy Branch Rd. and at Sam Eig Hwy.), traffic management strategies (such as clearing crashes and disabled cars faster) and traffic avoidance strategies (such as telecommuting). To help address east-west congestion, I support widening Muncaster Mill Road to two lanes each way, and MD 28/MD 198 from Georgia Ave. to U.S. 29 to two lanes each way.

**The County's average annual population growth rate of 1.5%—about 14,000 people a year—means the County is adding a population equal to the cities of Gaithersburg or Rockville every four years. This rate is not sustainable.**

I strongly support the Corridor Cities Transitway, which would connect Clarksburg, Germantown, Gaithersburg, and Rockville to the Shady Grove Metro, and the Purple Line to connect spokes of Metro. I have long advocated for free or inexpensive bus service. In 2000, I championed reducing the 14-day pass on Ride-On from \$18 to \$10. It remains \$10 today.

I strongly opposed this Council's 5-4 vote on October 23, 2003 to end a major traffic test for new development that required developers to mitigate traffic from their development that impacted intersections outside the immediate area of their development. Taxpayers are now paying for roads that developers used to.

I also strongly opposed this Council's 5-4 vote on June 22, 2004 to endorse an economic development strategy of adding jobs faster than housing. The policy worsens rush-hour congestion and drives up housing prices, exacerbating two of our County's worst problems.

### MD Plans ICC Tolls of \$7/day

The \$3 billion ICC was sold to the public with the claim that it would "relieve gridlock for the entire region" (Sept. 2002 "End Gridlock Team" mailing). However, MD's own Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the ICC (Nov. 2004) found the ICC wouldn't relieve traffic on I-270 or I-95 (see Effects on Transportation, IV-50, DEIS at [www.iccstudy.org](http://www.iccstudy.org)), and would add traffic to the Beltway in Montgomery County (see Environmental Consequences, IV-316-317, DEIS).

On June 1, 2006, *The Washington Post*, which has long supported the ICC, editorialized that the ICC "will probably have little effect" on the Capital Beltway's heavy congestion, but "will provide across-the-board economic benefits to both Montgomery and Prince George's"

In a *Washington Post* story of July 13, 2005 ("More Intense Development Likely With Md. Connector," D1), Stewart J. Greenebaum, president of a large office and housing development company, said "You'll see development happen at a faster pace once the ICC actually happens." Robert R. Harris, a land-use lawyer whose clients include several property owners with land near the ICC, said "they'll be able to say there's adequate [roads to handle] more development."

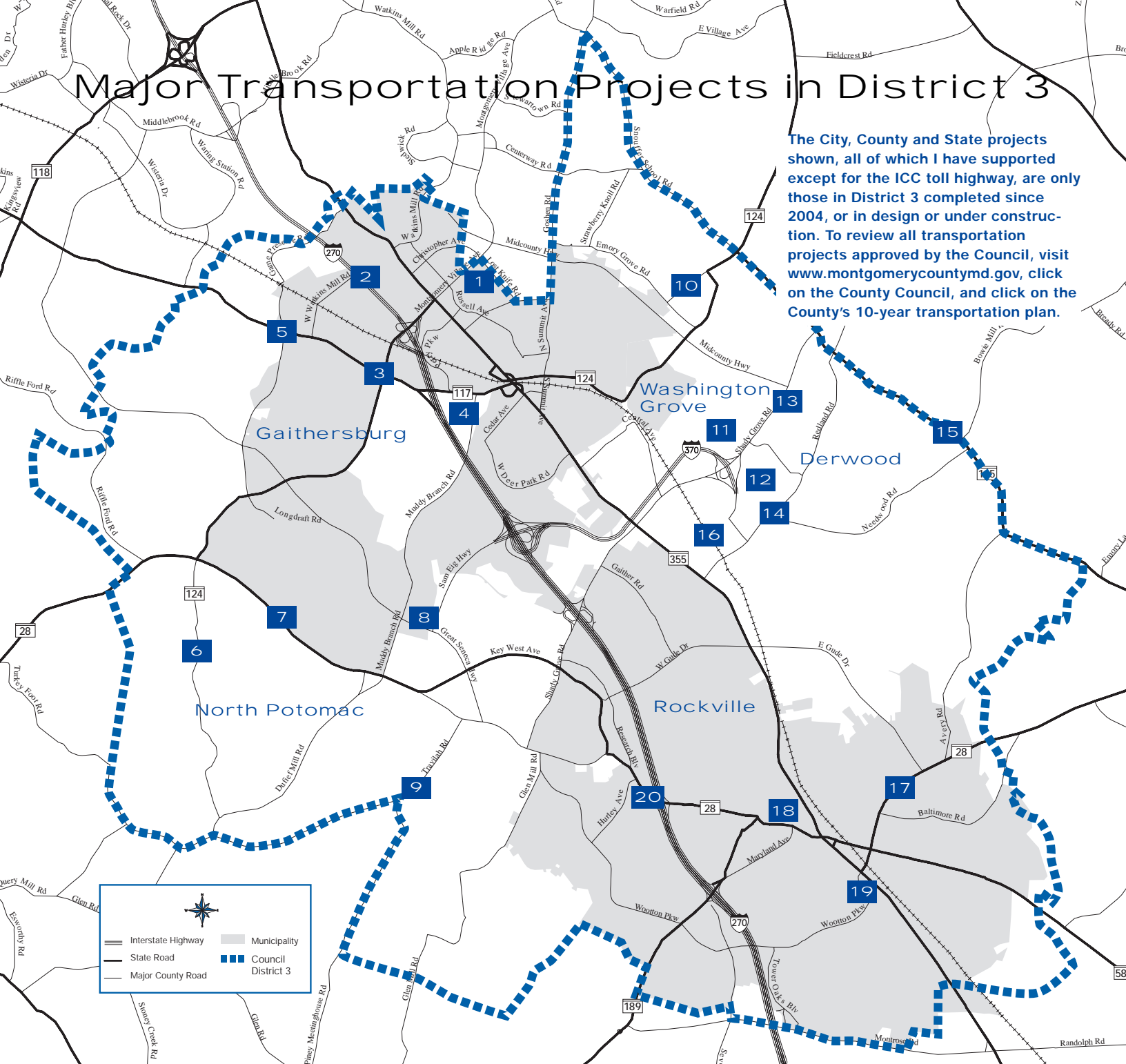
**At \$7/day, daily roundtrip commuters on the ICC would pay more than \$1,500 per year in tolls, preventing many low- and moderate-income people from using a highway their taxes paid to build—and deterring use by others.**

Many drivers are highly sensitive to tolls. The toll sensitivity analysis in the DEIS found that 10,000 fewer drivers a day would use the ICC if daily tolls were \$6.10 versus \$4.68 roundtrip. In fact, the State plans ICC tolls of \$7.20 a day (at 20 cents/mile) in 2010, the soonest MD has said the highway could be done (Environmental Consequences, IV-311-314).

- 1 Midcounty Hwy., Christopher Ave., Lost Knife Rd. at Mont. Village Ave. Turn lanes added to improve traffic flow through intersections  
Status: Completed in 2004
- 2 Watkins Mill Rd. and I-270  
New interchange with I-270  
Status: In design.
- 3 Clopper Rd. (MD 117) and Quince Orchard Rd. (MD 124) intersection  
Rebuilt to improve traffic flow  
Status: Completed in 2005
- 4 W. Diamond Ave. (MD 117) at I-270 in Gaithersburg  
Widened to add capacity/access to Olde Towne; sidewalks constructed  
Status: Completed in 2004
- 5 Clopper Rd. (MD 117) from Quince Orchard Rd. (MD 124) to Seneca Creek State Park  
Widen to add capacity  
Status: In design
- 6 Quince Orchard Rd. from Darnestown Rd. to south of Horse Center Rd.  
Multiple spot safety improvements, including a sidewalk/bikepath  
Status: To be completed in 2007
- 7 Darnestown Rd. (MD 28) from Riffle Ford Rd. to Great Seneca Hwy.  
Widened; bike lanes and sidewalks added; noise walls installed  
Status: Completed in 2004
- 8 Great Seneca Hwy. at Muddy Branch Rd. and Sam Eig Hwy.  
Through and turning lanes added to increase capacity at intersections  
Status: Completed in 2005
- 9 Travilah Rd. from Darnestown Rd. to Dufief Mill Rd.  
Completely re-engineer road for safety; add sidewalk/bikepath  
Status: Construction scheduled to begin Dec. 2006, finish Feb. 2008
- 10 Woodfield Rd. from Midcounty Hwy. to Airpark Dr.  
Widen to add capacity  
Status: In design
- 11 Intercounty Connector from I-370 to US Route 1 in Laurel  
New six-lane toll highway  
Status: Construction pending
- 12 Shady Grove Access Bike Path  
Improve bicycle access to Metro  
Status: To be constructed in 2008

# Major Transportation Projects in District 3

The City, County and State projects shown, all of which I have supported except for the ICC toll highway, are only those in District 3 completed since 2004, or in design or under construction. To review all transportation projects approved by the Council, visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov), click on the County Council, and click on the County's 10-year transportation plan.



**13** Shady Grove Rd. from Briardale Rd. to Muncaster Mill Rd.  
**Widened to 3 lanes each way throughout; new sidewalk**  
Status: Completed in 2004 except the noise walls, which are funded for construction in 2006-07; noise walls along portions of Midcounty Hwy to be completed in 2007-08

**14** Redland Rd. from Crabbs Branch Way to Baederwood Ln.  
**Improve traffic flow and add hiker/biker path**  
Status: In design

**15** Muncaster Mill Rd. (MD 115) from Redland Rd. to Norbeck Rd.  
**Safety improvements**  
Status: Completed in 2006

**16** Corridor Cities Transitway from Clarksburg to Shady Grove Metro  
**Construct dedicated transitway**  
Status: In design

**17** Rockville Millennium Trail along Norbeck Rd. (MD 28) east of Veirs Mill Rd. (MD 586)  
**Improve hiker/biker safety**  
Status: Completed in 2005

**18** Maryland Ave.  
**Extend to Rockville Town Center**  
Status: To be completed in 2006

**19** Rockville Millennium Trail along First St. extended and Wootton Pkwy. between Veirs Mill Rd. and Edmonston Dr.  
**Improve hiker/biker safety**  
Status: Completed in 2006

**20** Rockville Trail Bridge along MD 28 (W. Montgomery Ave.) over I-270  
**Improve hiker/biker safety**  
Status: To be completed in 2007

## Police & Fire Update

As chair of the Council's Public Safety Committee, I work closely with County Police Chief Tom Manger, Park Police Chief Nathaniel Barber and Fire Chief Tom Carr to continuously improve the Departments' capacities to protect and assist the public. Although the County has a low rate of violent crime for a county with nearly one million people, robberies rose 30 percent in 2005.

The Council approved 90 new positions for the County Police in the last two years to strengthen the Department in robbery investigations, in Gaithersburg, Wheaton and Silver Spring, in K9, in DNA analysis, and in traffic safety. The use of speed cameras will begin this fall.

To address gang activity, the County is implementing a balanced and comprehensive approach of prevention, intervention, and enforcement. In 2005, less than 1% of reported County crimes were classified as gang-related. Cybercrime and identify theft are also being targeted with more enforcement and education.

The County is opening four new fire stations in the next four years to catch up with the growth in the upcounty. An interim station in Clarksburg is open. Two stations will be added in Germantown, and one in the northwest Rockville area at the Training Academy. \$32 million of new fire apparatus is being purchased.

## Smoke-free Restaurants

As lead sponsor of the County's Smoke-free Restaurant law, I am proud that the law protects restaurant workers and patrons from hazardous second-hand smoke. People can breathe easy, knowing that the air is safe in the County's restaurants/bars. The law is necessary to protect the public health. Its success has encouraged several neighboring jurisdictions to join us in going smoke-free.

Meanwhile, the restaurant industry continues to thrive. Sales tax revenues of the County's restaurants rose more than 7% the first year of the law. I provided testimony to the City of Gaithersburg, the Howard and Prince George's County Councils, the District of Columbia and the General Assembly about the law's effectiveness, refuting unfounded claims of the Maryland Restaurant Association.



County Councilmember Phil Andrews, lead sponsor of the County's Smoke-free Restaurant law—the region's first—is joined by Maryland and District of Columbia smoke-free leaders as he releases sales tax data for Montgomery County's restaurant industry. Restaurant sales tax revenues increased by more than 7% in the first twelve months of the law, which took effect October 9, 2003, compared to the prior year. The District, Prince George's and Howard County have since passed smoke-free laws.



### Councilmember Phil Andrews

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**INSIDE: What you need to do to be prepared for an emergency; and an update on traffic relief**

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